

Bighorn National Forest Plan Revision Existing Condition Assessment

DRAFT Forestwide Assessment



Ringbone Lake,
Cloud Peak Wilderness

Forestwide Existing Condition Assessment

| | | # of pages |
|---------------------|--|---------------|
| Chapter 1 | Introduction | 3 pgs |
| Chapter 2 | Forest Plan | 3 pgs |
| | Comparison of Existing Standards and Guidelines, Management Areas and Goals and Objectives | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What's broken and needs to be fixed in the current Plan What are the Issues at the Forestwide Scale | |
| Chapter 3 | Air | 4 pgs |
| Chapter 4 | Aquatics | 22 pgs |
| Chapter 5 | Economic Assessment | |
| | Big Horn County | 68 pgs |
| | Johnson County | 58 pgs |
| | Sheridan County | 59 pgs |
| | Washakie County | 60 pgs |
| Chapter 6 | Forested Vegetation | |
| | Introduction to Forested Vegetation | 10 pgs |
| | General Forestwide Assessment | 18 pgs |
| | Fire | 10 pgs |
| | White Paper on Fragmentation | 12 pgs |
| | Bighorn Section Scale Description | |
| | Ecological Context | 57 pgs |
| | Spruce Fir | 22 pgs |
| | Douglas Fir | 20 pgs |
| | Limber Pine | 7 pgs |
| | Aspen | 10 pgs |
| | Ponderosa | 5 pgs |
| | Lodgepole | 7 pgs |
| | Juniper | 2 pgs |
| Chapter 7 | Minerals and Geology | 5 pgs |
| Chapter 8 | Plants | 12 pgs |
| Chapter 9 | Recreation | 5 pgs |
| Chapter 10 | Research Natural Areas | 5 pgs |
| Chapter 11 | Roads | 6 pgs |
| Chapter 12 | Scenery | Not Available |
| Chapter 13 | Social | |
| | Historical Social Assessment | 9 pgs |
| | Social Assessment of the Four County Area | 46 pgs |
| Chapter 14 | Soils | 4 pgs |
| Chapter 15 | Wilderness | Not Available |
| Chapter 16 | Wildlife | 5 pgs |
| Bibliography | | 8 pgs |

Preface

This Forestwide Existing Condition Assessment will be used in the Bighorn Forest Plan Revision to describe resources at the National Forest scale, and how they relate to the existing Forest Plan. This assessment was compiled to augment the nine geographic area existing condition assessments. The Forest-wide scale assessment includes many of the same resource items considered at the geographic area scale, but also includes other resources/topics:

Those items not amenable to analysis at the geographic area scale. For example, most wildlife species are not bound by geographic area boundaries, and to avoid needless repetition in the assessments, such topics will only be discussed at the Forest scale.

- Where databases were not complete or where analysis was still on going at the time the geographic area scale assessments were completed. Examples in this category are fire condition classes and timber suitability.

There is very little information in this assessment concerning other than National Forest System land. This information will be gathered and analyzed, where appropriate, in the draft and final environmental impact statements' effects analyses.

This existing condition assessment focuses on physical and biological resources, and in some cases, human uses and resources, such as timber harvest, grazing and recreation. It also includes a draft existing condition assessment of the economies of the four counties in the Big Horn Mountain area. The draft and final environmental impact statements will include a more complete social analysis, which is currently being compiled by Dr. Audie Blevins and Dr. Katherine Jensen of the University of Wyoming.

Despite the fact that this assessment primarily focuses on the environmental effects of human uses, it must be remembered that National Forests are managed *to be used* by people. This is implicit in the laws governing National Forest management¹. Human use of the National Forests has been directed administratively since the earliest days of the Forest Service, "This force has two chief duties: to protect the reserves against fire, and to assist the people in their use."² That tradition continues to this day in the "Caring for the land and serving people" mission. While this assessment focuses on the environmental effects that people are having on the resource, the point is to make sure that the uses we enjoy today are sustainable so that our children and grandchildren can continue to use and enjoy the Bighorn National Forest.

Disclaimer for GIS generated data: The Forest Service uses the most current and complete data available. GIS data and product accuracy may vary. They may be: developed from sources of differing accuracy, accurate only at certain scales, based on modeling or interpretation, incomplete while being created or revised, etc. Using GIS products for purposes other than those for which they were created, may yield inaccurate or misleading results. The Forest Service reserves the right to correct, update, modify or replace GIS products without notification. The GIS data in these documents were generated using ArcInfo 7.2.1, operating on a Unix platform, with analysis occurring between August of 2001 and January of 2002. For more information, contact the Bighorn National Forest.

¹ The Multiple Use Sustained Yield Act of 1960, the Renewable Resources Planning Act, and the National Forest Management Act, just to name a few.

² Forest Service "Use Book" of 1905.